



GreenHouse Mentoring Volunteer Survey – Gangs - March 2021



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1. Introduction

GreenHouse Mentoring is a project of Stopsley Baptist Church, a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, Company Number - 7605036, Registered Charity Number - 1150563, Registered Office - Stopsley Baptist Church, St Thomas' Road, Luton, LU2 7XP

GreenHouse Mentoring (GHM) started as a pilot project in 2000 and has been fully operating since 2002.

This document describes the results of the annual survey of Volunteers, taken in March 2021 during a period of Lockdown from Coronavirus.

2. Distribution

GreenHouse Mentoring is working with the Youth Offending Service to help those on the periphery of gangs & knife crime from being dragged into more trouble.

Part of this will be to develop awareness training for Mentors and a Mentoring Module to help Young People.

We asked Volunteers to take 5 minutes to give us some feedback about their knowledge of the area so that we can be more effective and provide better help to Mentors and Mentees.

This feedback is anonymous.

This survey was distributed via email and text to approx. 180 Volunteers in a GHM VOLUNTEER, GHM STAFF, POTENTIAL or ON HOLD category during the period in March 2021.

<https://forms.gle/hxLwXqXXTFNLcpys7>

88 replies were received, a 49% response overall, which is higher than many previous surveys.

3. Analysis

The detail results are shown in section 4,

3.1 Summary, Conclusions & Recommendations ...

from this year and those outstanding from previous years:

- ◆ The general understanding of gangs was good, over 70% identified the most important characteristics and signs. Some of the terminology was misunderstood.
- ◆ The law around carrying of knives was not well understood.

- ◆ When presented with potential interventions by Parents, almost 100% gave the correct answers
- ◆ **Demographics (see Appendix A)**
 - a. 80.7% of participants lived in Luton (LU1-4)
 - b. The age of participants was well spread out – 21 and under (7.9%) ; 22-30 (19.3%) ; 31-40 (17%) ; 41-50 (19.3%) ; 51 – 60 (20.5%) ; Over 60 (15.9%)
 - c. Gender – 73.9% were female, 26.1% male
 - d. Ethnicity:
 - i. White – 52.3%
 - ii. Black – 27.3%
 - iii. Asian – 11.4%
 - iv. Mixed – 5.7%
 - v. Unspecified – 3.4%
- ◆ The response to the survey was good and showed a group of Volunteers with a reasonable understanding of the subject area but with room for improvement and further training.
- ◆ Final comments from Volunteers showed some support for further work in this area.
- ◆ Analysis of the demographics showed a few minor differences in answers, older people tending to be more correct in their answers for some questions and a higher understanding of gangs in LU3/4.

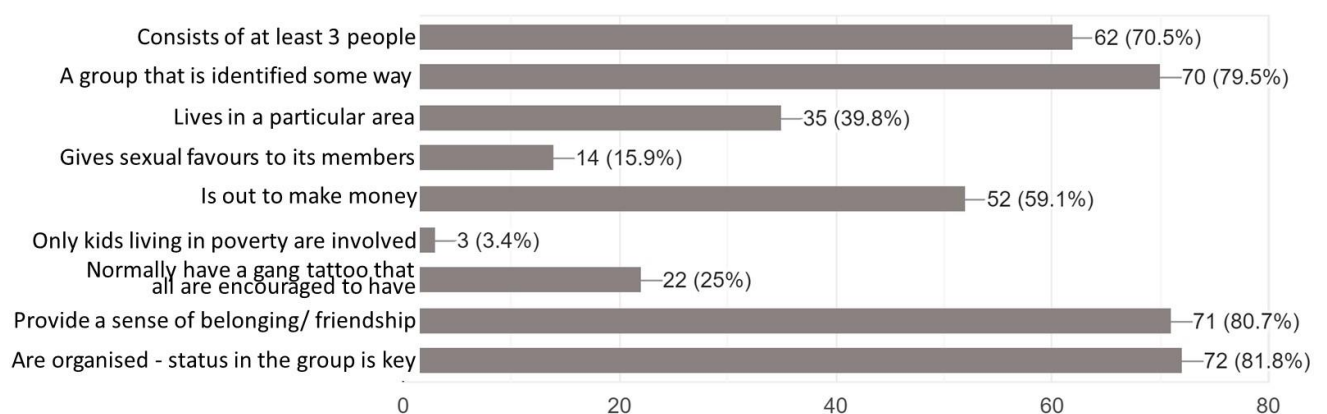
4. Detail Results

4.1 Question 1 – What is a Gang?

We said “A gang is a group of people who spend time together in public places that see themselves (and are seen by others) as a noticeable group and engage in a range of criminal activities and violence. Please tick all the characteristics of a gang below that you think are true.”

What is a Gang?

88 responses



Expected Answer

The options given were:

- Consists of at least 3 people
- A group that is identified some way
- Lives in a particular area
- Gives sexual favours to its members
- Is out to make money
- Only kids living in poverty are involved
- Normally have a gang tattoo that all are encouraged to have
- Provide a sense of belonging/ friendship
- Are organised - status in the group is key

The answers were that they may have any or all of the following features:

Status, Sense of belonging, Friendships, Curious, Power, Protection, to make Money, Peer Pressure, Boredom

4.1.1 Analysis

88 Answers, 0 skipped.

Overall the participants identified the most important characteristics of gangs at 70% or higher.

4.2 Question 2 – What are the signs to look out for?

We asked “What are you likely to see if a child is getting involved with gangs. Tick one answer for each row.” Possible Answers were: Always, Sometimes, Unlikely, Never. Possible signs to assess were:

- ◆ Changes in Physical appearance
- ◆ Badge of Local Gang
- ◆ Unusual Behaviour
- ◆ Living in LU5
- ◆ Unexplained possessions, money
- ◆ Committing Crimes e.g. shoplifting
- ◆ Away from home, school at unusual times
- ◆ New girlfriend from lower class

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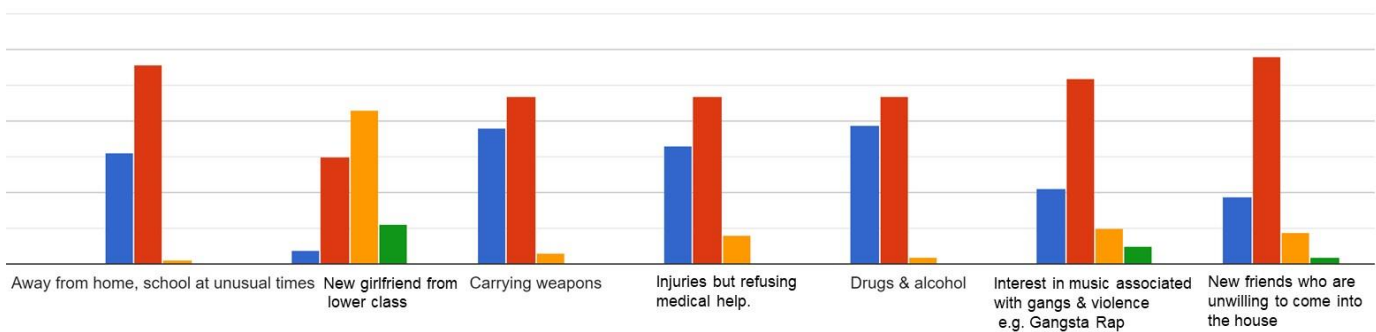
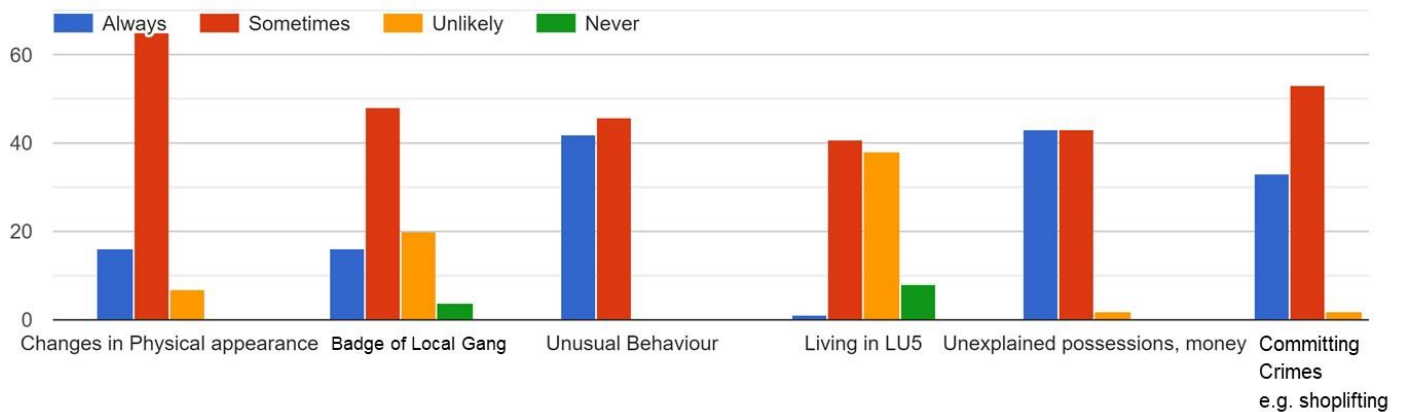
- ◆ Carrying weapons
- ◆ Injuries but refusing medical help.
- ◆ Drugs & alcohol
- ◆ Interest in music associated with gangs & violence e.g. “Gangsta Rap”
- ◆ New friends who are unwilling to come into the house

4.2.2 Analysis

82 Answers, 0 skipped.

Most Volunteers identified the most likely signs as either Always or Sometimes – the percentage stating this was always over 90% except for the question regarding Gang related music, which was 83%.

What are the Signs to look out for?



Expected Result

The typical changes expected are...

Changes in Physical appearance

Unusual Behaviour

Unexplained possessions, money

Committing Crimes e.g. shoplifting

Away from home, school at unusual times

Carrying weapons

Injuries but refusing medical help.

Drugs & alcohol

Interest in music associated with gangs & violence e.g. Gangsta Rap

4.3 Question 3 – Have you heard about? Do you know?

We asked participants whether they had heard about or knew the following words or phrases

Expected Answer

Post Code Wars – Yes, they exist in Luton - areas or territories are defined by their post codes.

County Lines - County Lines is where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries (although not exclusively), usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs. The 'County Line' is the mobile phone line used to take the orders of drugs.

Is it illegal to carry a Swiss Army knife? - No

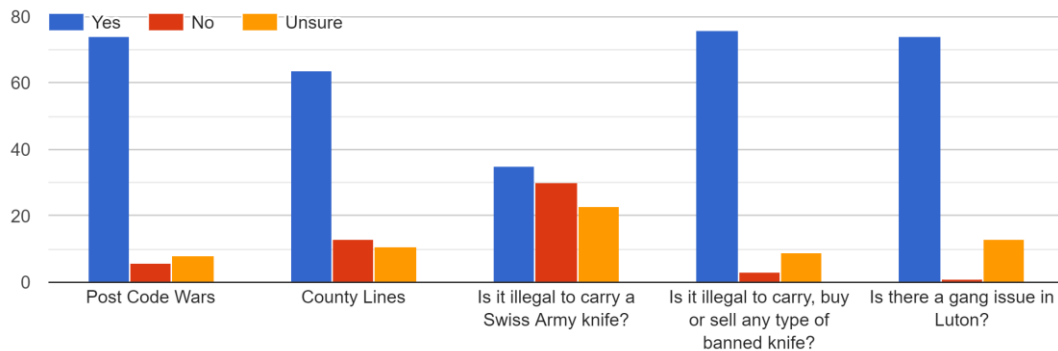
Is it illegal to carry, buy or sell any type of banned knife? - Yes

Is there a gang issue in Luton? - Yes

4.3.1 Analysis – Most enjoyable

88 Answers, 0 skipped

Have you heard about? Do you know?



Overall most Volunteers understood well the situation with over 84% answering correctly for most of the questions. Knowledge of County Lines was just over 72%. The only question for which the answer was marginal was whether it was illegal to carry a swiss army knife, where the answers for yes, no and unsure were similar and showing uncertainty about the answer.

Knives (from <https://www.police.uk/pu/advice-crime-prevention/possession-of-weapons/>)

It is illegal to:

- sell a knife of any kind to anyone under 18 years old (16 to 18 year olds in Scotland can buy cutlery and kitchen knives)
- carry a knife in public without good reason - unless it's a knife with a folding blade 3 inches long (7.62 cm) or less, e.g. a Swiss Army knife (a "lock knife" does not come into the category of "folding pocketknife" because it is not immediately foldable at all times)
- carry, buy or sell any type of banned knife
- use any knife in a threatening way (including a legal knife, such as a Swiss Army knife)

4.4 Question 4 – True or False?

We asked a series of true or false questions. Participants were requested to tick one answer from True, False or Unsure from the following questions.

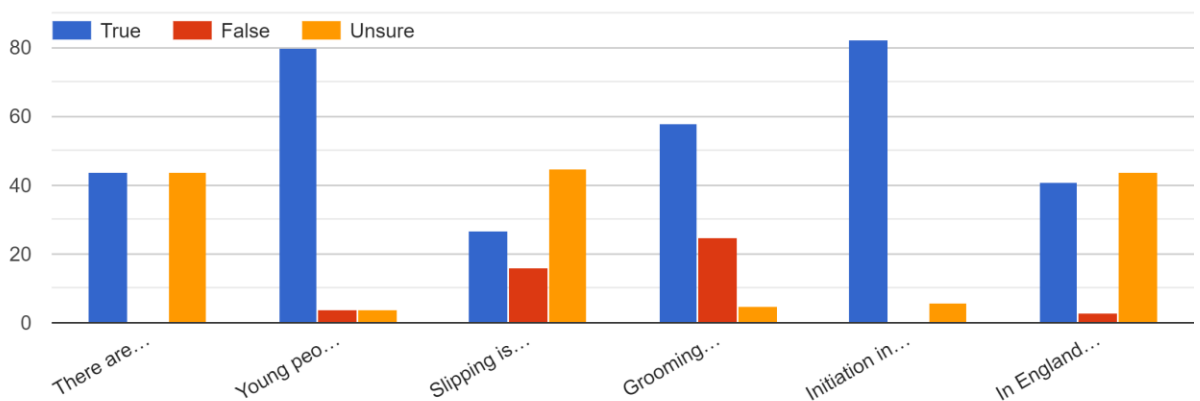
- There are over 46000 individual gang members in England
- Young people involved in street gangs are often unaware of the risks to their family
- Slipping is what gangs call when a new recruit commits an offence
- Grooming is about luring a young person into sexual exploitation

- Initiation into gangs is where a young person will prove themselves by showing the gang they are loyal and can handle themselves
- In England there has been a 200% increase in gang rapes over the past 3 years.

4.4.1 Analysis – Least enjoyable

88 Answers, 0 skipped

True or False?



The answers to these questions are quite mixed, showing a superficial understanding of the area.

Expected Answers

There were an estimated 46000 individual gang members in England alone according to a Children's Commissioner report. - July 2017 - Feb 2019 a BBC Report identified as many as 27,000 children estimated to be in gangs.

Unsure

Young people involved in street gangs are often unaware of the risks to their family - True

Slipping is what gangs call when a new recruit commits an offence - False - Slipping is the term used by young people when they are caught in the wrong area/ territory. Most young people caught slipping are in danger of being robbed, stabbed or beaten up. However, if you are a gang member you are more likely to be stabbed or killed.

Grooming is about luring a young person into sexual exploitation - False - it is also the term used for when a gang member influences/ attracts young people into gangs. Gang members start by looking after the young person by buying them flashy things or pretending to care about them.

Initiation into gangs is where a young person will prove themselves by showing the gang they are loyal and can handle themselves. **True** - the young person proves this by robbing/ beating someone up and by gang raping a girl.

In England there has been a 200% increase in gang rapes over the past 3 years. **True**

4.5 Question 5 – What can Parents Do?

We asked “What are the most important things? Check any item you think is important”. The list is given below:

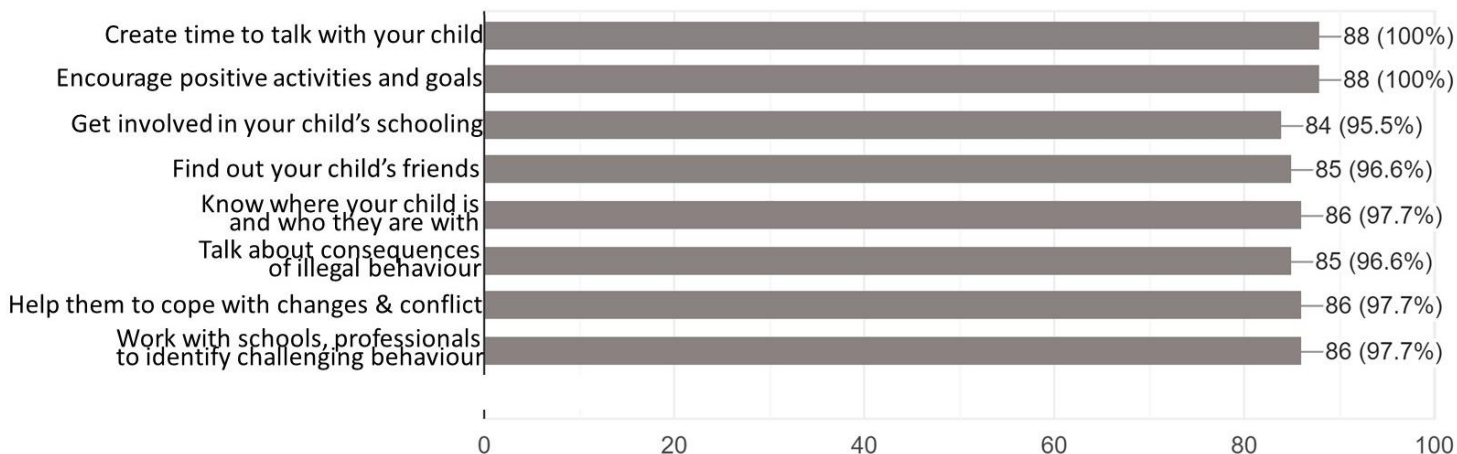
- Create time to talk with your child
- Encourage positive activities and goals
- Get involved in your child's schooling
- Find out your child's friends
- Know where your child is and who they are with
- Talk about consequences of illegal behaviour
- Help them to cope with changes and conflict
- Work with schools, professionals to identify challenging behaviour

4.5.1 Analysis

Answered: 88, Skipped: 0

What can Parents Do?

88 responses



Volunteers clearly felt that the parental behaviours suggested were all suitable with over 95% scores for each behaviour.

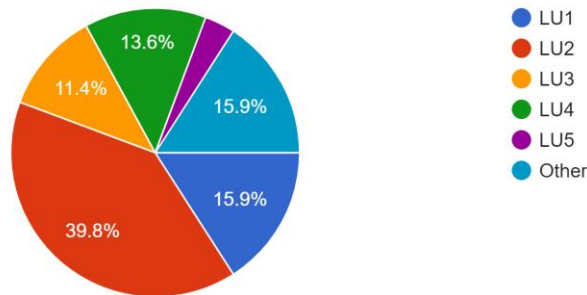
Expected Answer: All of the above!

4.6 Final Questions - Demographics

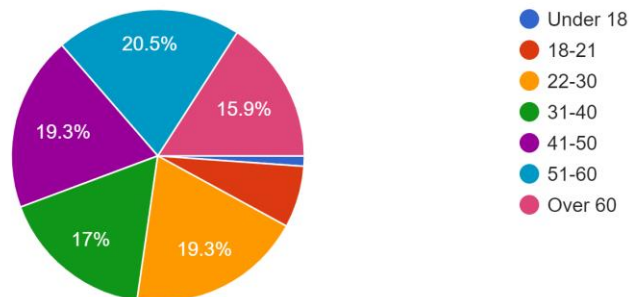
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Finally we asked “It would be helpful to have some simple information about yourself to see whether there are differences of understanding between different groupings. All information will be treated securely and will be kept anonymous.”

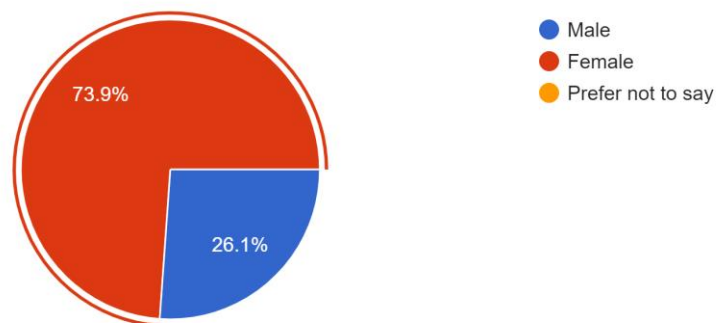
What is the main part of your post code
88 responses



What is your age?
88 responses



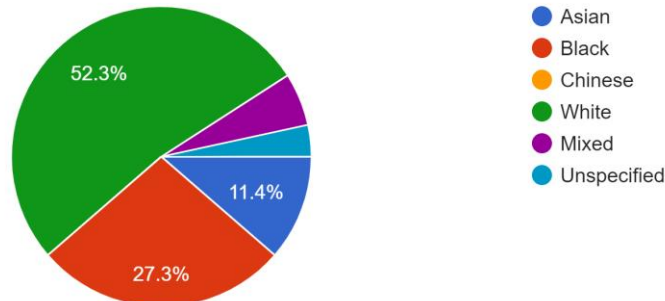
What is your gender?
88 responses



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How would you describe your ethnicity?

88 responses



4.7 Final Comments

Lastly, we asked whether there were any final comments, questions about this questionnaire.

Answered: 40, Skipped: 48

Analysing the comments and counting no answer as meaning there were no specific answer, gives the following analysis.

| Category | % |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Nothing Specific | 71% |
| More needs to be done e.g. Training | 8% |
| Unaware of Problem with Gangs | 3% |
| Survey unclear | 3% |
| Positive step forward | 3% |
| Already aware | 3% |
| Concerned | 2% |
| Parental Shortcomings | 2% |
| Interesting | 1% |
| More information requested | 1% |
| Pandemic has helped | 1% |
| Grand Total | 100 |

Here is a full list of comments made, except those that said they had no comment.

| No | Final Comments |
|----|---|
| 6 | Did not know the extent of the problem with gangs in Luton |
| 7 | Interesting article, and we know about Postcode Wars well, in the form of graffiti and actual fights. |
| 9 | It is all sadly on the rise |
| 10 | I think it would be a really beneficial course and something that could be a great support to both mentors and the service users. |

- 12 I personally found most of the questions easy to answer as I have a good relationship with many youngsters
- 13 I worked as a Panel member with Luton Youth offending services for many years. They take gang wars and knife crime very seriously and spend a lot of time with offenders trying to ensure they don't reoffend. They have one of the best rates in the country for rehabilitating these youngsters.
- 14 Gang culture is very deep, and a lot of exploitation takes place within it and within similar age group. Early intervention is very necessary. From as early year 1 age group. Family breakdown, uninvolved parents due to working commitments, exposure at an early age to inappropriate behaviours, watching over age programmes on TV, no real role model for children, peer pressure, stigmatising etc. All these are some experiences that leads kids into gang culture.
- 16 Some parents don't seem to care about their children. Don't care who they are with and where.
- 17 This worries me as a mother of two teen boys. We live in Marsh Farm and my son's best friend is in Lewsey Farm- This is a constant worry to me (surprisingly not them though!)
- 18 Bit tricky to understand first question - difference between when to tick always (as in is it 'always a potential indicator' or if that factor is present - then it is always indicative they are involved in a gang
- 20 Not really, only to say re: grooming was also aware of the explanation given but it wasn't posted as a possible answer.
- 22 There is not enough being done to curtail young people getting involved in gang culture. In my experience looking closer to home is needed also to further understand why young people feel the need to seek out gang cultures.
- 23 Well done 🤝 ✓
- 24 How will it be used?
- 26 Outreach youth programs in communities needed to curb the lost of gang formations amongst our youth
- 27 There needs to be more awareness of gang culture for everyone
- 29 I don't have a close experience with gangs or gang culture.
- 30 To my knowledge as of this time of the pandemic and what I see with families, the changes are great with families I got involved with, they talk more even eat on the dining table play games together things they weren't really sure of, the changes in families are better than before the pandemic at list to them that I know and talk to with my experience from GreenHouse
- 32 The young people don't have a lot of positive things to do. The youth clubs have shut over the years and if we don't invest in our young people when they are young. Then we lose them to the streets. Investment is what is needed, these young people are the society of the future.
- 33 Good to hear GHM is looking to make a difference in this area
- 34 I don't think there is a big gang problem in Luton, compared to London and other big cities.
- 36 Thanks for all you are doing.
- 38 Training should be available to more groups
- 39 Pls double check whether it's correct to single out male only as active gang members. Girls gangs are on the increase well
- 40 I think there is more education required around gangs not only for young people but adults alike.

Appendix A - Demographics

Overall

Of the 88 people who answered the survey they were broken down as follows:

| Age | LU1 | LU2 | LU3 | LU4 | LU5 | Other | Grand Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Under 21 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | | | 7 |
| 22-30 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 17 |
| 31-40 | 4 | 2 | 2 | | | 7 | 15 |
| 41-50 | | 9 | 4 | 2 | | 2 | 17 |
| 51-60 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 5 | | 2 | 18 |
| Over 60 | | 11 | | 1 | | 2 | 14 |
| Grand Total | 14 | 35 | 10 | 12 | 3 | 14 | 88 |

| Gender | LU1 | LU2 | LU3 | LU4 | LU5 | Other | Grand Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Female | 11 | 25 | 7 | 10 | | 12 | 65 |
| Male | 3 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 23 |
| Grand Total | 14 | 35 | 10 | 12 | 3 | 14 | 88 |

| Ethnicity | LU1 | LU2 | LU3 | LU4 | LU5 | Other | Grand Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Asian | 4 | | 1 | 5 | | | 10 |
| Black | 3 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 24 |
| Mixed | 2 | 2 | 1 | | | | 5 |
| Unspecified | | | 1 | | | 2 | 3 |
| White | 5 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 46 |
| Grand Total | 14 | 35 | 10 | 12 | 3 | 14 | 88 |

| Ethnicity/Age | Asian | Black | Mixed | Unspecified | White | Grand Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Under 21 | 2 | 3 | 1 | | 1 | 7 |
| 22-30 | 6 | 4 | | 1 | 6 | 17 |
| 31-40 | | 5 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 15 |
| 41-50 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 17 |
| 51-60 | | 4 | 2 | | 12 | 18 |
| Over 60 | | 3 | | | 11 | 14 |
| Grand Total | 10 | 24 | 5 | 3 | 46 | 88 |

| Age/Gender | Female | Male | Grand Total |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Under 21 | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| 22-30 | 13 | 4 | 17 |
| 31-40 | 11 | 4 | 15 |
| 41-50 | 17 | | 17 |
| 51-60 | 11 | 7 | 18 |
| Over 60 | 8 | 6 | 14 |
| Grand Total | 65 | 23 | 88 |

Signs of Gangs

- ◆ Post Codes - When looking for signs of gangs, LU4 had a tendency to identify signs as “Always” more than other areas and also “Never” figure is higher. This might indicate a greater understanding of gangs in LU4.

| Percentages | LU1 | LU2 | LU3 | LU4 | Other |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Always | 26% | 26% | 25% | 37% | 36% |
| Sometimes | 55% | 62% | 53% | 44% | 51% |
| Unlikely | 16% | 10% | 18% | 13% | 12% |
| Never | 3% | 2% | 3% | 6% | 1% |

- ◆ Age Groups - In general, the older age groups were more likely to identify signs as “Always” or “Sometimes” than younger groupings.

| Percentages | Under | | | | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| | 21 | 22-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51-60 | Over 60 |
| Always | 23% | 22% | 31% | 36% | 27% | 35% |
| Sometimes | 49% | 55% | 52% | 51% | 65% | 55% |
| Unlikely | 19% | 19% | 13% | 11% | 6% | 10% |
| Never | 9% | 4% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 0% |

- ◆ Gender – Males tend to lower scoring in the “Always” groupings than Females.

| Percentages | Female | Male |
|-------------|--------|------|
| Always | 33% | 20% |
| Sometimes | 53% | 61% |
| Unlikely | 11% | 16% |
| Never | 2% | 3% |

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- ◆ Ethnicity – White participants tend to higher scoring in the “Always” or “Sometimes” groupings than others, but overall figures are similar.

| Percentages | Asian | Black | Mixed | Unspecified | White |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Always | 32% | 31% | 22% | 31% | 29% |
| Sometimes | 48% | 50% | 60% | 51% | 60% |
| Unlikely | 14% | 15% | 18% | 18% | 10% |
| Never | 7% | 4% | 0% | 0% | 2% |

Question 3 – Have you heard about?

- ◆ Post Codes – LU3 was the area with marginally the most correct answers, LU1 was the area with the most incorrect answers.

| Percentages | LU1 | LU2 | LU3 | LU4 | Other |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Correct | 60% | 78% | 80% | 70% | 68% |
| Wrong | 27% | 11% | 10% | 17% | 6% |
| Unsure | 13% | 11% | 10% | 13% | 26% |

- ◆ Age – Interestingly, the older the participant, the more likely to get the answers correct. Under 30 year olds generally more Unsure and less Correct.

| Percentages | Under | | | | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| | 21 | 22-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51-60 | Over 60 |
| Correct | 63% | 62% | 72% | 78% | 75% | 79% |
| Wrong | 17% | 25% | 5% | 16% | 8% | 9% |
| Unsure | 20% | 13% | 23% | 6% | 17% | 13% |

- ◆ Gender – Overall little difference between Male & Female

| Percentages | Female | Male |
|-------------|--------|------|
| Correct | 71% | 76% |
| Wrong | 14% | 10% |
| Unsure | 14% | 15% |

- ◆ Ethnicity – there appears to be a higher percentage of wrong answers in the Asian group compared to others. Black participants were more “Unsure” than other ethnicities.

| Percentages | Asian | Black | Mixed | Unspecified | White |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Correct | 68% | 70% | 84% | 53% | 74% |
| Wrong | 28% | 13% | 8% | 0% | 12% |
| Unsure | 4% | 18% | 8% | 47% | 14% |

Question 4 – True or False?

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- ◆ Post Codes – Post Codes are not significant on this question.

| Number | 14 | 35 | 10 | 12 | 17 |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Percentages | LU1 | LU2 | LU3 | LU4 | Other |
| Correct | 55% | 55% | 55% | 52% | 55% |
| Wrong | 42% | 45% | 45% | 49% | 45% |

- ◆ Age – does not appear to be very significant

| Number | 7 | 17 | 15 | 17 | 18 | 14 |
|-------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Percentages | Under 21 | 22-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51-60 | Over 60 |
| Correct | 60% | 53% | 56% | 60% | 48% | 55% |
| Wrong | 40% | 47% | 45% | 40% | 52% | 45% |

- ◆ Gender – is not significant on these questions

| Number | 65 | 23 |
|-------------|--------|------|
| Percentages | Female | Male |
| Correct | 54% | 55% |
| Wrong | 46% | 45% |

- ◆ Ethnicity – there are some differences between different ethnicities, White and Mixed being the lowest correct answers.

| Number | 10 | 24 | 5 | 3 | 46 |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Percentages | Asian | Black | Mixed | Unspecified | White |
| Correct | 57% | 62% | 50% | 44% | 51% |
| Wrong | 43% | 38% | 50% | 56% | 49% |